

Annual Project Officer Report
Contract No: NO-2-CB-77032
“Support and Management for the Projects: Effects of the Chornobyl Accident on Thyroid Cancer and Leukemia/Lymphoma” for the period 30 September 1997 to 29 September 1998

Project Officer: Ihor J. Masnyk, Ph.D.
REB, DCB, NCI

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After the contract was signed on 30 September 1997, the first post-award site visit was held at the Columbia University site on 14 November 1997 by the NCI team consisting of the Project Officer and the Contracting Specialist. The entire Columbia University staff working on this project was present. The primary purpose of this visit was to discuss in detail the contract terms, to explain uncertainties and to project gradually increasing involvement of the staff in the three projects in Ukraine and Belarus. Also, this was the first opportunity for me to meet the staff and to learn first hand of the strengths and possible weaknesses of the personnel, extent of administrative support and adequacy of facilities.

The first few months of the contract year were devoted to establishment of the infrastructure and recruitment of administrative staff as well as procurement of necessary equipment and familiarization with individual responsibilities.

In October Dr. Howe participated with NCI staff and its consultants in a review visit to the leukemia project in Kyiv, Ukraine. Although this was not his first visit to the Research Center for Radiation Medicine, it was the first one in his role as the new PI of the support contract.

Dr. Howe prepared two position papers during the first quarter for internal use: “Possible strategies for identifying the cohort for the study of leukemia and lymphoma in Ukrainian clean-up workers” and “The use of computerized record linkage in cohort studies”.

On 2 January 1998 the contractor held a training workshop for their staff to sensitize them to Belarus and Ukraine cultural and economic circumstances.

On 9 January an orientation meeting was held at NCI for the Columbia contract staff in preparation for and execution of the first quarterly visit to Ukraine and Belarus thyroid projects, which took place 31 January - 13 February 98. A detailed trip report was prepared after the visits by every participating member and a debriefing meeting of all contract participants was held at Columbia University after their return to share their impressions with others.

On 3 April Columbia team visited NCI for an update, review of the last visit and planning for the second six months of the contract year.

The second program review visit to Ukraine and Belarus was held during the 18 May -

7 June period. This trip included a visit to Dnipropetrovsk by select leukemia project consultants. Later, the thyroid projects were reviewed in Kyiv and Minsk. Again, Columbia staff prepared exhaustive trip reports and participated very actively in all activities and discussions.

Starting in September, we initiated Chornobyl staff meetings with the contract PI (Dr. G. Howe) with a plan to have at least one such meeting per month. This would allow both sides to participate in project planning, in analysis of possible problems and in searching for optimal solutions to potential problems.

Overall I am very impressed with the contribution of the Columbia staff, their interest in the project and energetic contribution to all activities. I have observed no weaknesses in their execution of the expected tasks. I am looking towards the second year of productive work with them.

Attachments